

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

MINING NEAR BOISE

Number 1029

September 1993

An 1862-1864 gold rush to Boise Basin--largest in Pacific Northwest history--led United States Army authorities to found a military Fort Boise, July 4, 1863. This action led to an exile of Boise's Shoshoni peoples to a reservation created for them in 1867 at Fort Hall. Adjacent to Fort Boise, a city grew up immediately, and in 1864, Boise became capital of Idaho. A strategic location where roads to Boise Basin and to newer Owyhee mining districts joined a primary Oregon Trail route accounted for Boise's early urban growth. With lucrative mining markets nearby, irrigated farms in valley lands west of Boise flourished immediately. Mining supported Boise's economy for many years, and agriculture that started from mining origins eventually made Boise a larger city than any other Oregon Trail center between its Missouri Valley origins and its Willamette Valley terminals. As a service center for nearby gold and silver producers, Boise grew like a mining town during its early years, and its United States Assay Office--a National Historic Landmark--still stands as a symbol of mining and its importance in Idaho's development.

(This information has not been edited.)

Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428